

REMARKS

The above-referenced Office Action has been carefully reviewed and reconsideration thereof is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has rejected Claims 9-13, 15, 16, and 30 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph as being indefinite.

With respect to Claims 9 and 10, the phrase "such as" has been cancelled.

With respect to Claim 10, the means for removing the seal layer are shown, for example, on Figure 8, elements 170 and 172. Reference should also be made to the accompanying description.

With respect to Claim 15, the Examiner is respectfully directed to examine Figure 4 and the accompanying text for an understanding of how the evacuation holes function.

With respect to Claim 16, it is respectfully pointed out that that claim does not state "said pattern of said...". What is stated is "a pattern of said...".

With respect to Claim 30, it is respectfully submitted that "indexing repetitive patterns" requires no antecedent basis. Furthermore, Figure 1 illustrates the repetitive patterns.

Claims 1-3, 10, 21-23, and 30 have been rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Guigan.

With respect to Claim 1, that claim has been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim that the wells of Applicant's invention are thermoformed. The wells of Guigan are formed by heat sealing. As was previously pointed out, the two processes are entirely different and the differences would be immediately recognized by one having ordinary skill in the art.

With respect to Claim 2, the description of Guigan states that slits are formed in the wells.

With respect to Claim 3, that claim has been amended to more particularly point out and distinctly claim the size of the roll. Support for this amendment is found, for example, from lines 8-10 of page 11 of the Specification.

Not supported

With respect to Claim 10, that claim has been amended to state that the sealing material is removably sealed to the wells. Support for this amendment is found, for example, from Claim 10 as filed.

With respect to Claims 21-23, see the above amendments and remarks with respect to Claims 1-3.

Claims 4-8 and 16-18 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guigan in view of Anderson. Applicant respectfully traverses this ground of rejection and incorporates here the above remarks with respect to Guigan. In spite of the fact that Applicant previously pointed out that the Examiner has failed to indicate how the references are applied to Claims 16-18, the Examiner continues this omission.

Claims 9 and 11-14 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guigan in view of Hansen et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this ground of rejection and incorporates here the above remarks with respect to Guigan.

Again, the Examiner has applied this ground of rejection to Claim 14, but has not indicated how the references are applied to that claim.

The rejection of the other claims on this ground was addressed in the Amendment filed October 20, 2000, and those remarks are incorporated by reference hereinto.

Claim 15 has been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Guigan in view of Tidemann et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this ground of rejection and incorporates the above remarks with respect to Guigan.

The Examiner's attention is respectfully drawn to Applicant's Claim 15 wherein it is stated that the holes are between wells. Tidemann et al. provide holes in the bottoms of the wells for an entirely different purpose. See column 5, lines 22-33.

In the Amendment filed October 20, 2000, the correction to line 21 of page 18 of the Specification should be made, instead, to line 21 of page 19 of the Specification.

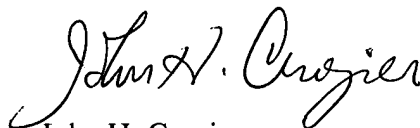
Figure 4 and the description thereof have been amended to more clearly describe the elements thereof. Support for these amendments is found, for example, from inspection of Figures 1 and 4 and the accompanying text.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is believed that the claims in the application, Claims 1-18, 21-23, and 30, are allowable and early action in that regard is respectfully requested.

Should any questions remain as to the allowability of the claims or should the Examiner have any suggestions with respect thereto, the undersigned would be grateful for the privilege of a telephone conference with the Examiner.

Date: April 3, 2001.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John H. Crozier".

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CLEAN SET OF CLAIMS

1. A method of chemical compound storage, comprising:
  - (c) providing a longitudinally extending carrier tape having therein a plurality of thermoformed chemical receiving wells; and
  - (d) adding to each of said chemical receiving wells a chemical compound.
2. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: placing a liquid tight sealing material over said chemical receiving wells to retain said chemical compounds therein and to minimize evaporation.
3. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 2, further comprising: forming said carrier tape into a compact roll for storage, said roll having about 100,000 aliquots and dimensions of about four inches wide by 16 inches long.
4. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: providing said carrier tape of a thermoformable material having a thickness on the order of from about 15 mils to about 20 mils.
5. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: providing said carrier tape formed of polypropylene to provide solvent resistance.

6. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: providing said carrier tape formed of clear polycarbonate or polystyrene to facilitate optical reading of contents within said chemical receiving wells.
7. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: providing said chemical receiving wells in repetitive matrixes selected from the group consisting of 8x12 wells with a spacing of 9mm between centers, 16x24 wells with a spacing of 4.5mm between centers, and 32x48 wells with a spacing of 2.25mm between centers.
8. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 7, further comprising: providing each of said repetitive matrixes with a unique identifier.
9. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 2, further comprising: providing said sealing material with a pressure sensitive adhesive to adhere said sealing material to said carrier tape to permit removal of said sealing material after adhesion to said carrier tape.
10. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 2, further comprising: providing said sealing material removably heat sealed to said carrier tape to permit removal of said sealing material after being sealed to said carrier tape.

11. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 10, further comprising providing said seal material as a two layer material having:

- (a) a lower, seal layer of a low melting point material inert to the contents of said chemical receiving wells; and
- (b) an upper high melting point layer having a higher tensile strength than said seal layer and being joined to said seal layer, to assist in removing said sealing material from said carrier tape.

12. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 11, further comprising: providing said lower seal layer formed of a material selected from the group consisting of modified low density polyethylene and ethyl vinyl acetate.

13. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 11, further comprising: providing said upper layer formed from polyester.

14. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 2, further comprising: removing said sealing material from said carrier tape by using a heated roll to warm said sealing material for removal.

15. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 2, further comprising:

(c) perforating said carrier tape with holes between said chemical receiving wells; and

(d) evacuating space between said seal material and said carrier tape at time of sealing to assure an intimate leak tight seal is achieved between said seal material and said carrier tape.

16. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 2, further comprising: die cutting said sealing material around a pattern of said chemical receiving wells to allow manual removal of said sealing material from said pattern of said chemical receiving wells.
17. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 3, further comprising: spinning said roll to force contents of said chemical receiving wells to bottoms of said chemical receiving wells by centrifugal force.
18. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: severing individual patterns of said chemical receiving wells from said carrier tape so that said individual patterns can be used independently.
21. A device for chemical compound storage, comprising: a longitudinally extending carrier tape having therein a plurality of thermoformed chemical receiving wells.

22. A device for chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 21, further comprising: a liquid tight sealing material disposed over said chemical receiving wells to retain said chemical compounds therein and to minimize evaporation.

23. A device for chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 22, wherein: said carrier tape is formable into a compact roll for storage, said roll having about 100,000 aliquots and dimensions of about four inches wide by 16 inches long.

30. A method of chemical compound storage, as defined in Claim 1, further comprising: indexing repetitive patterns of said wells using a tractor drive.



